

# King Lear

WILLIAM  
SHAKESPEARE



*William Shakespeare*

# *King Lear*



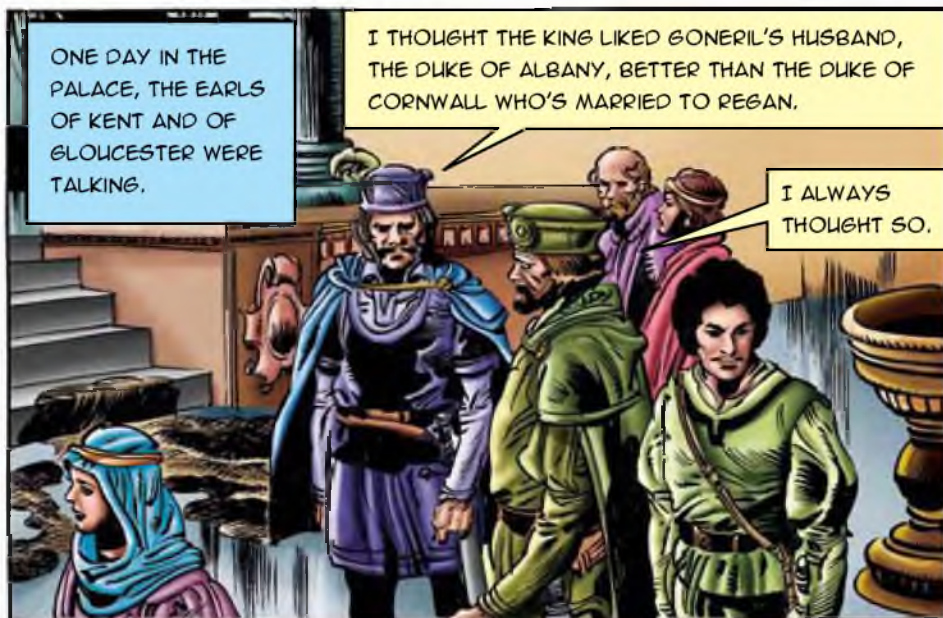


NEARLY TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO, OLD KING LEAR RULED BRITAIN. HE HAD THREE DAUGHTERS: GONERIL, REGAN, AND CORDELIA.



LEAR HAD ALWAYS BEEN A MAN WHO ACTED WITHOUT THINKING THINGS THROUGH. BECAUSE OF THIS, HE WAS ABOUT TO MAKE ONE OF THE BIGGEST MISTAKES OF HIS LIFE.





\* say that something is so





\* according to the law



AT THE SOUND OF  
TRUMPETS, KING  
LEAR ENTERED  
WITH HIS COURT.



THE KING OF  
FRANCE AND THE  
DUKE OF BURGUN-  
DY ARE OUTSIDE,  
GLOUCESTER.  
BRING THEM IN.

I WILL SIR.







\* a statement made before a group of people









\* explains, shows, tells about

\*\* showing how two things are alike or different



BUT CORDELIA, THE KING'S YOUNGEST DAUGHTER, WAS UNHAPPY AT WHAT HER SISTERS SAID.

WHAT DO I DO? I LOVE MY FATHER MORE THAN THEY DO.



BUT I CAN'T SPEAK OF MY LOVE. I CAN'T LIE AND FLATTER\* HIM, AS THEY DO.



IF MY FATHER DOESN'T KNOW THAT I LOVE HIM, THEN I CAN'T HELP IT!



\* make someone think he is better than he really is





THEN, HE TURNED TO CORDELIA, HIS YOUNGEST AND FAVORITE\* DAUGHTER.



\* best loved

\*\* sought after in marriage



YOU'RE MY FATHER, YOU'VE RAISED ME AND LOVED ME. I OBEY YOU, LOVE YOU, AND HONOR\* YOU.



I DON'T SEE HOW MY SISTERS CAN SAY THEY LOVE ONLY YOU. WHAT ABOUT THEIR HUSBANDS?



WHEN I MARRY, I SHALL GIVE MY HUSBAND HALF MY LOVE AND CARE.



I CANNOT DO WHAT THEY SAY THEY DO.



\* respect





\* whatever a child receives at his parents' death

\*\* have nothing more to do with



I'LL DIVIDE MY KINGDOM BETWEEN GONERIL AND REGAN. I'LL LIVE WITH EACH OF THEM IN TURN, WITH A HUNDRED KNIGHTS TO SERVE ME.



BUT THE EARL OF KENT PROTESTED.\*

I HAVE HONORED YOU AS MY KING. . . LOVED YOU LIKE A FATHER. BUT I CAN'T LET YOU MAKE SUCH A MISTAKE!



YOU ARE ACTING FOOLISHLY. CORDELIA DOES NOT LOVE YOU ANY LESS THAN THE OTHERS!

STOP, KENT, IF YOU WANT TO GO ON LIVING!



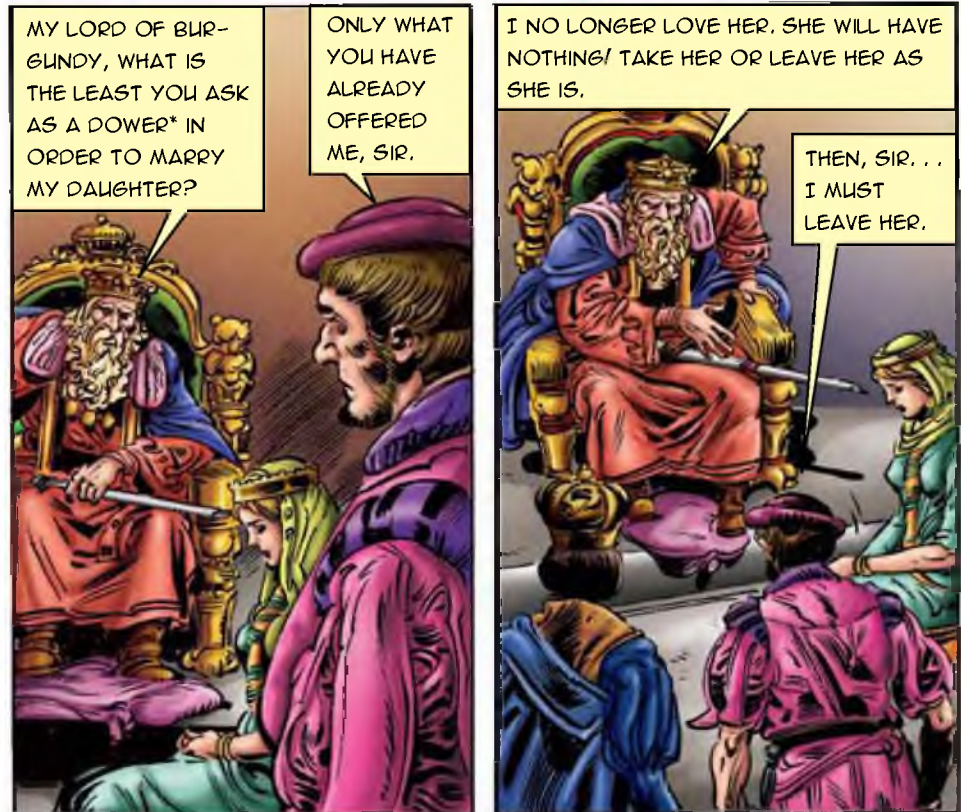
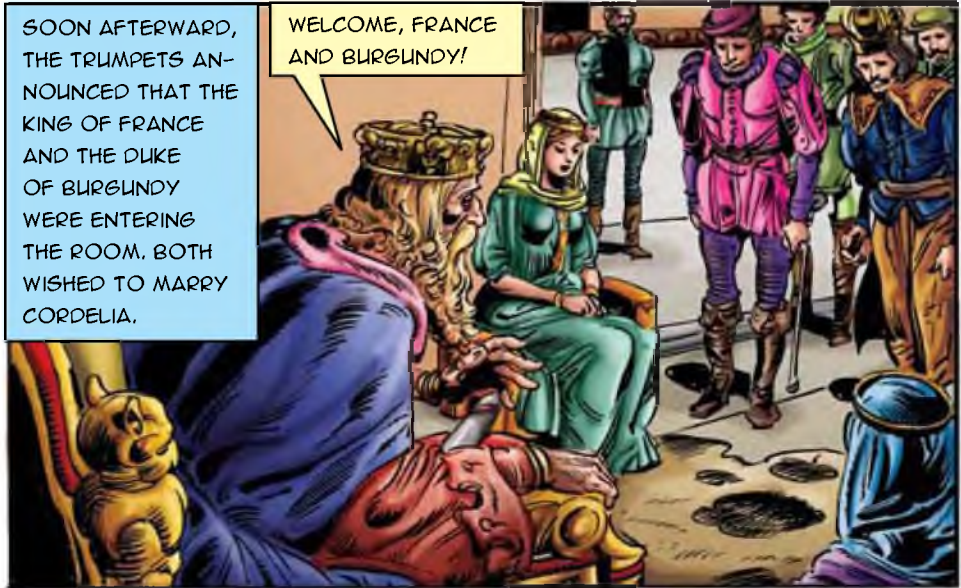
\* objected, did not agree





\* sent away forever





\* money given to a daughter and her husband when she is married







SHE IS YOURS. I'LL  
NEVER SEE HER AGAIN!  
BE GONE, WITHOUT MY  
LOVE AND MY BLESSING.



SAYING THIS, LEAR LEFT THE ROOM WITH THE DUKES  
OF CORNWALL, ALBANY, AND GLOUCESTER.

TELL YOUR  
SISTERS  
GOODBYE,

I LEAVE OUR FATHER TO YOUR CARE.  
GIVE HIM THE LOVE YOU SAY YOU  
FEEL FOR HIM.



DON'T TELL US  
WHAT TO DO!

SINCE YOU NOW HAVE  
NOTHING, YOU'D BETTER  
THINK ABOUT PLEASING  
YOUR NEW HUSBAND!





AND SO CORDELIA WENT TO FRANCE AND KENT WAS EXILED.\* KING LEAR GAVE UP HIS POWERS TO GONERIL AND REGAN.

MEANWHILE, IN GLOUCESTER'S CASTLE, HIS SON EDMUND PLOTTED AGAINST HIS HALF-BROTHER\*\* EDGAR.

WHY SHOULD I SUFFER BECAUSE MY MOTHER WAS NOT MARRIED TO MY FATHER? WHY SHOULD EDGAR GET EVERYTHING?



NO! I MUST HAVE EDGAR'S LAND FOR MYSELF!

AND THIS LETTER I HAVE WRITTEN WILL GET IT FOR ME!



\* sent away

\*\* a brother who shares only one parent with another brother or sister





\* the act of remaining faithful in hard times



"IF MY FATHER SHOULD DIE SOON,  
I WOULD GIVE YOU HALF OF HIS  
FORTUNE. YOUR BROTHER, EDGAR."



"IF MY FATHER SHOULD DIE  
SOON. . . I WOULD GIVE YOU HALF  
HIS FORTUNE. . ." EDGAR WROTE  
THIS? WHO BROUGHT IT TO YOU?



IS THIS HIS  
HANDWRITING?



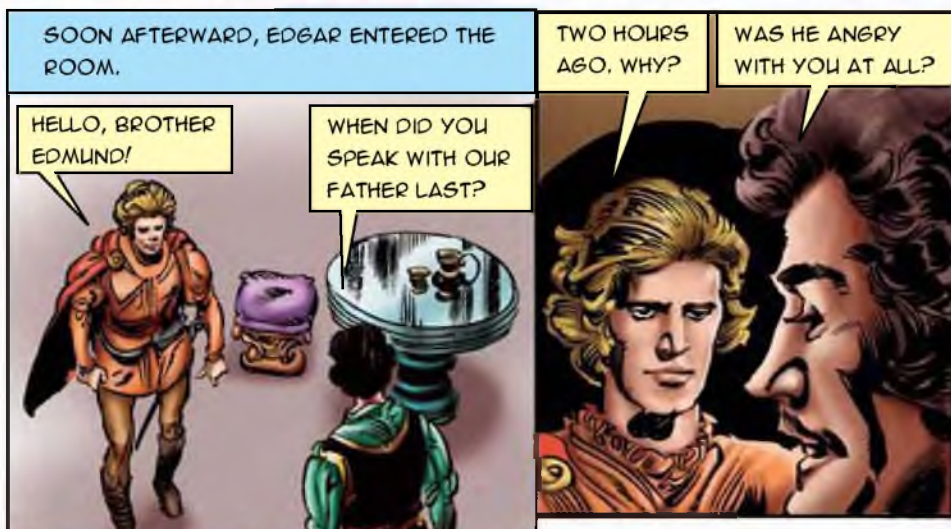
YES. I HOPE  
HIS HEART IS  
NOT IN IT. BUT  
I'VE HEARD  
HIM SAY  
SUCH THINGS  
BEFORE.



OH, HOW *COULD*  
HE? WHERE IS  
HE?

I DON'T KNOW. MAY-  
BE YOU MISJUDGE\*  
HIM. I'LL FIND HIM  
AND TEST HIM OUT.

\* believe someone to be different from what he really is





SOMEONE  
MUST HAVE  
LIED ABOUT  
ME!

THAT'S WHAT I AM  
AFRAID OF. GO TO MY  
ROOM UNTIL HE HAS  
TIME TO COOL OFF.



HERE IS THE KEY. STAY THERE UNTIL  
YOU HEAR FROM ME.

IS IT THAT  
BAD?



I THINK HE  
IS ANGRY  
ENOUGH TO  
KILL YOU! IF  
YOU DO GO  
OUTSIDE, GO  
ARMED!

I CAN'T BELIEVE  
IT! BUT LET ME  
KNOW WHAT  
HAPPENS.



AS EDGAR WENT  
AWAY, EDMUND  
SMILED AN EVIL  
SMILE.

A FATHER WHO  
BELIEVES TOO  
EASILY, AND  
A BROTHER  
TOO NOBLE\*  
TO BE SUSPI-  
CIOUS\*\*. . .  
I'LL SOON  
HAVE HIS  
FORTUNE!



\* good and honest

\*\* thinking evil of someone







\* dressed to look like someone else


AT THAT MOMENT, THE SERVANT OSWALD ENTERED THE ROOM. BUT INSTEAD OF SERVING THE KING, HE WALKED AWAY AGAIN. LEAR BEGAN TO SEE THAT GONERIL AND HER SERVANTS HAD NO RESPECT FOR HIS WISHES.

WHENEVER HE SAW HIS OLDEST DAUGHTER, SHE LOOKED ANGRY. ONE DAY HE COULD TAKE IT NO LONGER.

DAUGHTER, WHY DO YOU FROWN SO MUCH?

WHY SHOULDN'T I? YOUR FOOL MAKES FUN OF US. YOUR KNIGHTS MAKE TROUBLE. GET RID OF THEM AT ONCE! ALL YOU NEED HERE ARE A FEW OLD MEN TO SERVE YOU!

HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT TO ME? I HAVE ANOTHER DAUGHTER... I'LL GO TO HER! SADDLE MY HORSES!



BUT AS LEAR PREPARED TO LEAVE FOR REGAN'S CASTLE, GONERIL MADE PLANS OF HER OWN.

TAKE THIS LETTER TO MY SISTER. TELL HER EVERYTHING! THEN HURRY BACK.



WHILE ALL THIS WAS HAPPENING, EDMUND CONTINUED TO PLOT AGAINST EDGAR.

YOU MUST GO! NOT ONLY OUR FATHER IS LOOKING FOR YOU, BUT REGAN AND THE DUKE OF CORNWALL ARE TOO! THEY'RE COMING HERE NOW!

BUT I'VE DONE NOTHING TO HURT THEM!





FATHER'S COMING,  
QUICK, DRAW YOUR  
SWORD! I MUST  
PRETEND TO FIGHT  
YOU!



NOW GET AWAY,  
BROTHER, QUICKLY...  
OR THEY'LL CATCH  
YOU!



I'LL STAB MY-  
SELF—PRETEND  
THAT EDGAR HAS  
HURT ME!



LIGHT, HERE!  
TORCHES! FATHER!  
HELP!



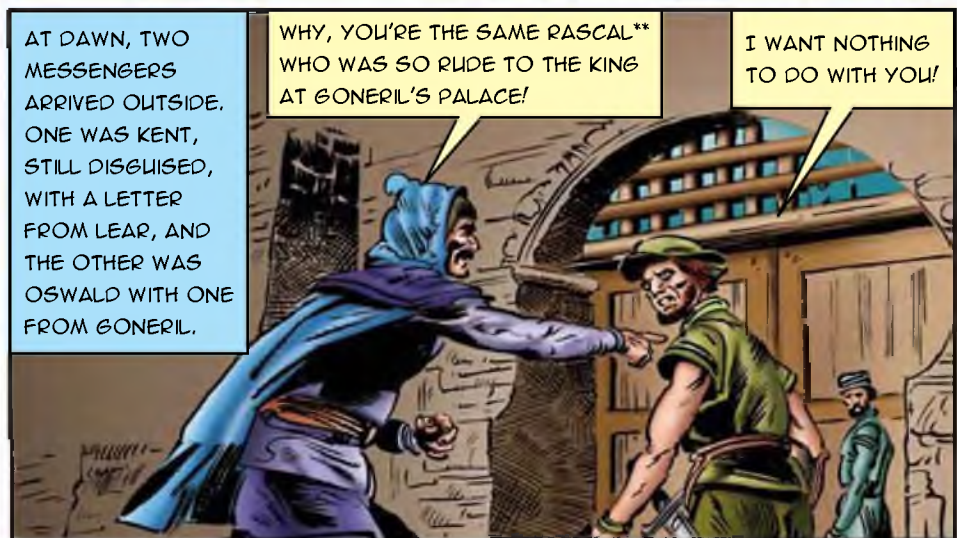
WHERE IS HE?



\* injured, cut

\*\* hunted as a criminal





\* help

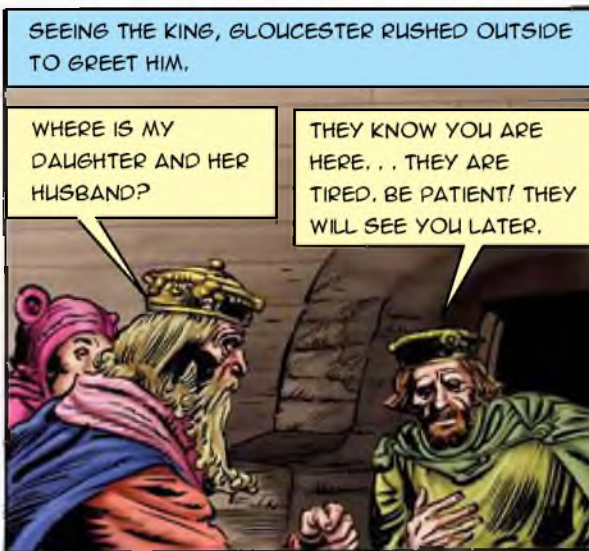
\*\* dishonest person







\* a wooden frame in which a person to be punished must sit for a certain time











WITH THAT, KING LEAR THREW UP HIS HANDS AND RUSHED AWAY. HE COULD NOT BELIEVE THAT HIS TWO DAUGHTERS HAD TURNED AGAINST HIM.

I WOULD RATHER LIVE OUTDOORS THAN UNDER YOUR ROOF! HEAVEN WILL GIVE ME MY REVENGE!\*

GO, THEN, OLD MAN!

BUT, SIR, . .

WE MUST GO IN. A STORM IS COMING!



GLOUCESTER FOLLOWED KING LEAR A SHORT WAY, BUT HE SOON RETURNED.

THE KING IS VERY ANGRY. HE'S LEAVING. WHERE WILL HE GO?

IT'S HIS OWN FAULT.

MAYBE IT WILL TEACH HIM A LESSON.



BUT THERE'S NOT EVEN A BUSH FOR SHELTER NEAR HERE!

HIS MEN WILL TAKE CARE OF HIM. SHUT YOUR DOORS AND LOCK THEM TIGHT!



REGAN ADVISES YOU WELL! IT IS A WILD NIGHT. COME INSIDE.

\* getting even with someone

DURING THE NIGHT THE STORM RAGED. ON THE HEATH,\* KENT MET ONE OF THE KING'S MEN.

WHERE IS THE KING?

OUT IN THE STORM. . . WITH ONLY HIS FOOL FOR COMPANY!



LISTEN! THE DUKES OF ALBANY AND CORNWALL ARE PLOTTING AGAINST EACH OTHER. GONERIL AND REGAN EACH WANT THE WHOLE KINGDOM! BUT HELP IS COMING FOR THE KING.



CORDELIA IS IN DOVER WITH A FRENCH ARMY. TAKE THIS RING, GO TO HER THERE, AND TELL HER WHAT'S HAPPENING.

I'LL GO QUICKLY!



MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE CASTLE, GLOUCESTER TALKED WITH EDMUND.

THEY'RE CRUEL TO THE OLD KING. THEY GIVE THE ORDERS IN MY OWN CASTLE. NOW THEY'RE FIGHTING AMONG THEMSELVES!

THAT'S VERY BAD!



\* a wild, marshy area



AND I'VE JUST HEARD THAT A FRENCH ARMY IS COMING TO HELP THE KING. I AM ON THE OLD KING'S SIDE IF I DIE FOR IT!



IT'S DANGEROUS, BUT I MUST GO AND FIND THE KING AND HELP HIM. TELL THE DUKE I AM ILL AND IN BED.



YES, FATHER.

MEANWHILE THE STORM STILL RAGED. KENT FOUND THE KING AND LED HIM TO A HUT.

AT LEAST IT'S SOMETHING. PLEASE GO INSIDE, SIR!

NO, I MUST PUT UP WITH WHAT THE POOR HAVE SUFFERED ALL THESE YEARS, WHEN I NEVER KNEW HOW IT WAS.

THERE'S A GHOST INSIDE HERE! HELP ME!



THE "GHOST" WAS EDGAR. TO ESCAPE, HE HAS DISGUISED HIMSELF AS A MAD BEGGAR.

GO AWAY!

HAVE HIS DAUGHTERS BROUGHT HIM TO THIS SAD STATE?







\* knew from seeing someone before

\*\* doing evil to someone who trusts him



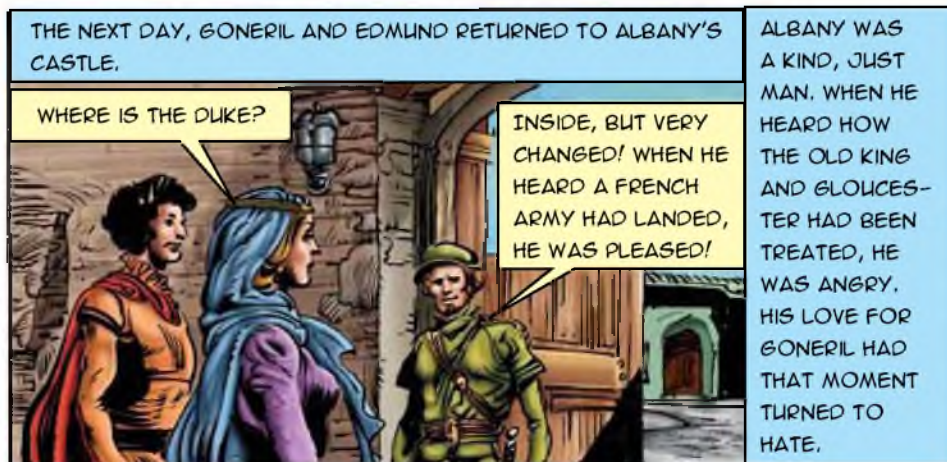




\* a person of low class







\* a woman whose husband has died






THEN HE FAINTED. EDGAR HELD HIM UNTIL HE CAME TO HIMSELF AGAIN.


WHERE AM I?  
DID I FALL?  
WHO ARE YOU?

I WAS HERE AT THE FOOT OF A HIGH CLIFF WHEN YOU JUMPED!

A close-up illustration of Edgar, a man with a beard and brown hair, holding Cordelia, a woman with blonde hair, who appears to be unconscious or fainting. Edgar is looking down at her with a concerned expression.

I SAW YOU FALL! IT IS A MIRACLE\* THAT YOU ARE STILL ALIVE!

IF THE GODS HAVE SAVED ME, THEN I WILL STAY ALIVE, EVEN WITH NO EYES.

An illustration of Edgar and Cordelia walking away from the cliff. Edgar is holding Cordelia's arm, and she is looking back over her shoulder with a determined expression.

JUST THEN KING LEAR CAME UPON THEM, AND THEY COULD TELL THAT HE WAS MAD.

LOOK, LOOK. . . A MOUSE! DRAW YOUR SWORDS!

I KNOW THAT VOICE—IT'S THE KING!

An illustration of King Lear, an older man with a long white beard and a crown, standing in a forest. He is looking at Edgar and Cordelia with a shocked expression. Edgar and Cordelia are standing next to him, looking at each other with concern.

EDGAR AND GLOUCESTER LISTENED SADLY AS THE MAD KING RAVED. THEN CORDELIA'S MEN FOUND HIM.

HERE HE IS! TAKE HIM GENTLY!

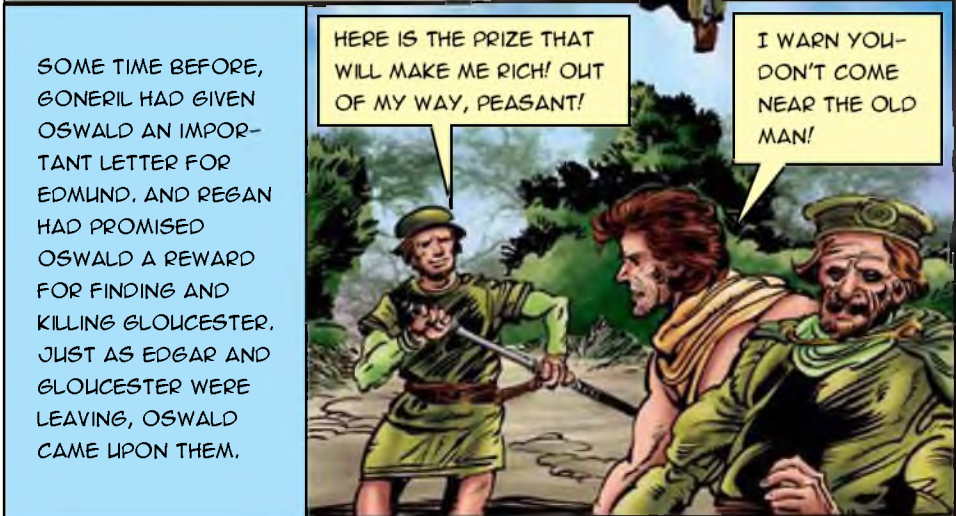
SIR, YOUR LOVING DAUGHTER. . .

AM I A PRISONER? TREAT ME WELL. I AM A KING.

An illustration of King Lear being taken by soldiers. Edgar and Gloucester are standing in the background, looking on sadly. Cordelia's men are in the foreground, taking King Lear away. Cordelia is looking at her father with a sad expression.

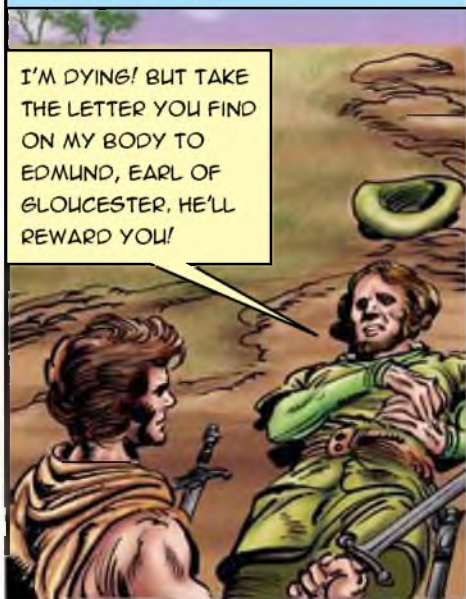
\* a wonderful happening that can't be explained or understood





BUT OSWALD WOULD NOT LISTEN.  
THEY FOUGHT AND OSWALD RECEIVED  
A FATAL\* WOUND.

I'M DYING! BUT TAKE  
THE LETTER YOU FIND  
ON MY BODY TO  
EDMUND, EARL OF  
GLOUCESTER, HE'LL  
REWARD YOU!



AS OSWALD DIED, EDGAR READ THE  
LETTER.

"YOU HAVE MANY CHANCES TO KILL  
MY HUSBAND AND FREE ME! REMEM-  
BER OUR VOWS OF LOVE AND RETURN  
TO MARRY ME, YOUR LOVING GON-  
ERIL." SO THAT IS WHAT'S HAPPENING!  
I WILL MAKE USE OF THIS AT A LATER  
TIME!



MEANWHILE, LEAR HAD AT LAST BEEN  
LED TO THE NEARBY FRENCH CAMP.

DEAR KENT, MY  
LIFE WILL BE TOO  
SHORT TO REPAY  
YOU FOR YOUR  
GOODNESS TO  
MY FATHER!

I WAS HAPPY TO  
HELP HIM, MADAM!



DOCTOR! HOW  
IS THE KING?

STILL SLEEPING. BUT  
I THINK YOU MIGHT  
WAKE HIM UP NOW.



\* leading to death





IN THE BRITISH CAMP, EDMUND AND REGAN WAITED FOR ALBANY AND GONERIL TO ARRIVE WITH THEIR ARMY.

I DON'T TRUST ALBANY! AND MY SISTER, . . . ARE YOU IN LOVE WITH HER?

MY FEELINGS FOR YOUR SISTER ARE MOST HONORABLE!\*

CORNWALL'S DEATH HAD MADE REGAN A WIDOW. SHE WAS JEALOUS\*\* OF GONERIL BECAUSE SHE WAS NOW IN LOVE WITH EDMUND TOO.

SOON ALBANY AND GONERIL ARRIVED.

I WILL NOT FIGHT CORDELIA AND OUR KING—ONLY AGAINST THE FRENCH ARMIES WHO HAVE ENTERED OUR LAND.

WELL SPOKEN, SIR!

THERE'S REGAN. I'D RATHER LOSE THE BATTLE THAN LOSE EDMUND TO HER!

BUT THE SISTERS COULD NOT WORRY ABOUT EDMUND AT THE MOMENT. AS THEY LEFT FOR ALBANY'S TENT TO PLAN THEIR BATTLE, EDGAR ENTERED DRESSED AS A PEASANT.

BEFORE YOU FIGHT THE BATTLE, READ THIS LETTER. AND IF YOU NEED ME TO PROVE THE TRUTH OF IT, HAVE SOMEONE CALL FOR ME!

\* correct, the way something is supposed to be

\*\* wanting what someone else has



AT THIS EDGAR LEFT AND EDMUND RETURNED.

THE ENEMY'S  
HERE! GET READY.

WE ARE  
READY!



BOTH SISTERS LOVE ME AND ARE JEALOUS. REGAN IS ALREADY A WIDOW, BUT ALBANY MAY DIE IN BATTLE! WHICH ONE SHALL I CHOOSE?



WELL IN ANY CASE, LEAR AND CORDELIA MUST DIE, EVEN THOUGH ALBANY WILL PROTECT THEM.

SOON THE ARMIES MET IN BATTLE. IN A SHORT TIME EVERYTHING WAS OVER, AND EDGAR RUSHED BACK TO GLOUCESTER.



COME QUICK. . . I'LL LEAD YOU TO SAFETY! THE FRENCH ARE BEATEN! CORDELIA AND LEAR ARE CAPTURED!

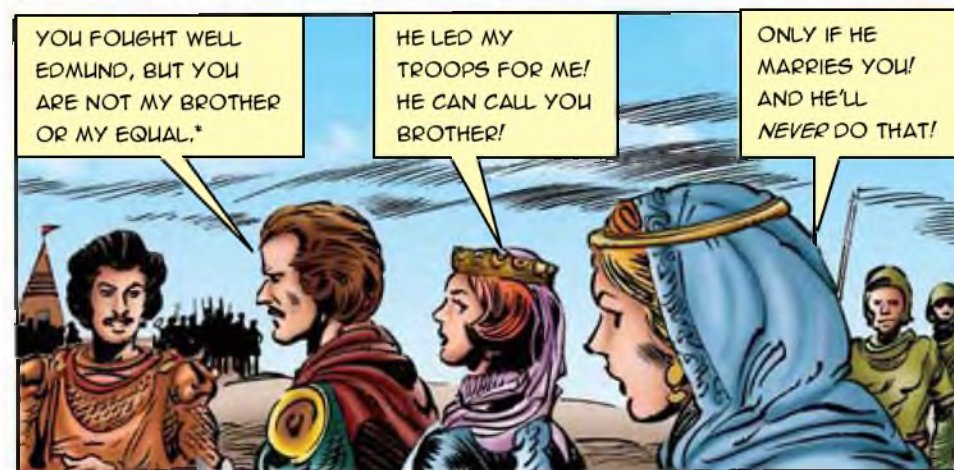
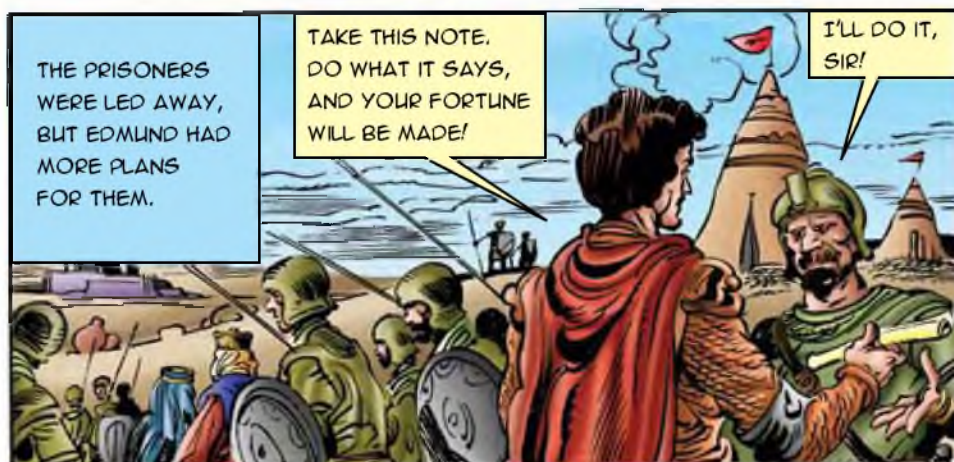
IN THE BRITISH CAMP, EDMUND WAS IN CHARGE.

TAKE THEM AWAY  
TO PRISON!

COME! WE TWO WILL LIVE LIKE BIRDS IN A CAGE TOGETHER!







\* someone of the same class





\* acting against one's own country

AFTER THIS, REGAN WAS HELPED AWAY. ALBANY PREPARED TO FIGHT EDMUND AS THE LAW REQUIRED.\*

IF ANY OTHER MAN WILL FIGHT EDMUND, THE EARL OF GLOUCESTER, TO PROVE HIM A TRAITOR, LET HIM APPEAR NOW! OTHERWISE, THE DUKE OF ALBANY WILL DO SO!



AS THE TRUMPETS SOUNDED THROUGH THE CAMP, EDGAR APPEARED.

YOU HAVE DONE WRONG TO YOUR BROTHER AND YOUR FATHER; YOU HAVE PLOTTED AGAINST THIS PRINCE. MY SWORD WILL PROVE IT!

WHOEVER YOU ARE, MY SWORD WILL PROVE THAT YOU LIE!



THE TWO MEN FOUGHT, EDMUND WAS WOUNDED.

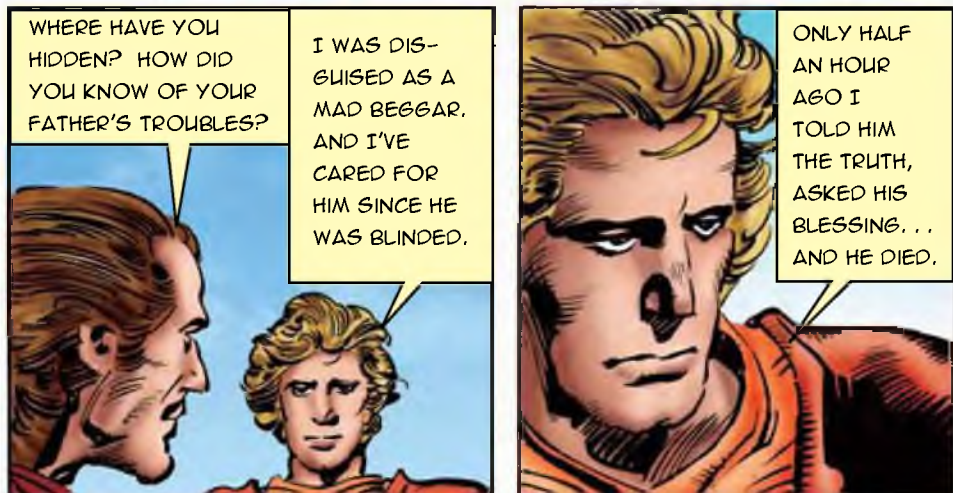
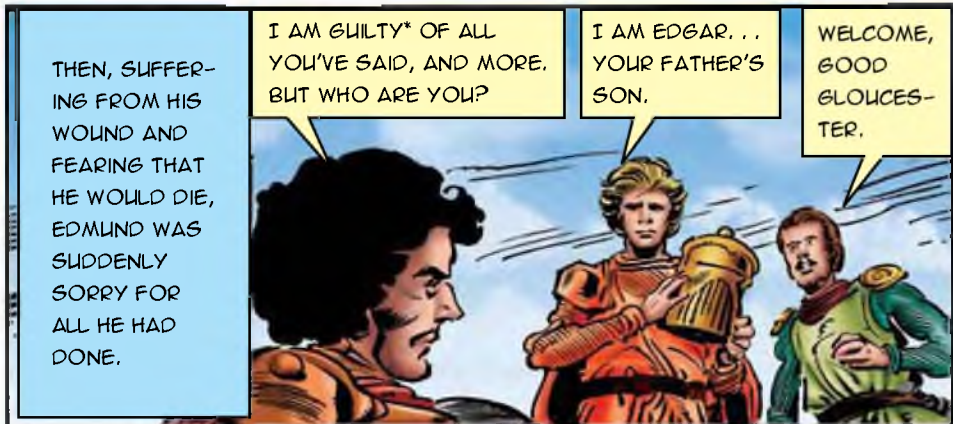
THIS PROVES NOTHING! YOU WERE TRICKED!

SHUT YOUR MOUTH, WOMAN, OR I'LL STOP IT WITH THIS PAPER!



\* made necessary





\* having done something wrong









